IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1 and 11, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A sheet material identifying apparatus for identifying the kind of a sheet material, comprising:

an adjusting assembly for dehumidifying or humidifying a predetermined region of the sheet material ~~and adjusting~~ to adjust the moisture content of the predetermined region to within a predetermined range;

an external force applying unit for applying an external force to the predetermined region of the sheet material ~~whose moisture content is adjusted~~;

a detecting unit for detecting the external force propagated through the sheet while the external force is applied by the external force applying unit; and

an identifying unit which uses a detection result of the detection unit for identifying the kind of a sheet material,

wherein the external force applying unit is provided at a position where the sheet material for which the moisture content has been adjusted is fed and applies the external force to the predetermined region of the sheet material for which the moisture content has been adjusted.

2. (Original) The sheet material identifying apparatus according to claim 1, wherein

the adjusting assembly is a heating mechanism.

3. (Original) The sheet material identifying apparatus according to claim 2, wherein

the heating mechanism is a fixing device in an electronic photographing apparatus.

4. (Original) The sheet material identifying apparatus according to claim 2, wherein

the heating mechanism is a transfer assembly in a heat transfer printer.

5. (Original) The sheet material identifying apparatus according to claim 1, wherein

the adjusting assembly is a humidifying mechanism.

6. (Previously Presented) The sheet material identifying apparatus according to claim 5, wherein

the humidifying mechanism is an ink discharging mechanism in an ink jet printer.

7. (Previously Presented) The sheet material identifying apparatus according to claim 1, wherein

the identifying unit identifies the kind of the sheet material by comparing the external force detected by the detecting unit with a table previously storing the external forces and the kinds of sheet materials corresponding to the external forces.

8. (Previously Presented) The sheet material identifying apparatus according to claim 1, which further comprises

a moisture content detecting unit for detecting the moisture content of the sheet material, wherein the moisture content detecting unit controls the adjusting assembly so as to adjust the moisture content of the predetermined region of the sheet material in accordance with a moisture content detection result by the moisture content detecting unit.

9. (Original) The sheet material identifying apparatus according to claim 1, wherein

the external force to be applied to the predetermined region by the external force applying means is an impact force or vibration.

10. (Previously Presented) A sheet material treating apparatus comprising the sheet material identifying apparatus of claim 1, wherein

sheet treatment parameters are set using information about the kind of the sheet material identified by the sheet material identifying apparatus.

11. (Currently Amended) A sheet material identifying method for identifying the kind of a sheet material, comprising:

a moisture content adjusting step of dehumidifying or humidifying a predetermined region of the sheet material to adjust the moisture content of the predetermined region to within a predetermined range;

an external force applying step of applying an external force to the predetermined region of the sheet material whose moisture content is adjusted by an external force applying means;

an external force detecting step of detecting the applied external force propagated through the sheet after the external force is applied by the external force applying means; and

an identifying step which uses a detection result of the detecting step to identify the kind of a sheet material after the moisture content of the predetermined region is controlled so as to be kept in a predetermined range.